DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 418 434 SP 037 834

AUTHOR Aguilera, David A.; Forsyth, Robert B.

TITLE Linking School-Based Governance and Instructional Change: A Case Study of Two ATLAS Schools.

PUB DATE May 97

NOTE 32p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, March 24-28, 1997).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Change Strategies; *Educational Change; *Educational Strategies; *Governance; *Instructional Development; Intermediate Grades; Leadership; Middle Schools; *Program Implementation; Secondary Education

IDENTIFIERS ATLAS Schools

ABSTRACT

What are the linkages between school-based governance and instructional change? This paper describes how two ATLAS schools developed the linkage between school-based governance and instructional change. (ATLAS means "communities for Authentic Teaching, Learning and Assessment for all Students"). ATLAS was funded by the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC). Data were gathered through interviews with each school's planning and management team and with individuals in school leadership roles. The paper summarizes the chronology of program implementation in each school. A conclusion is that the schools eventually organized around both management and instructional issues, although their approaches were based on the local context and the "home" organizations of the ATLAS facilitators. Both schools ended with stronger instructional programs and stronger planning-management teams. ATLAS functioned as a catalyst for change. The outcomes point to the importance of the school context (factors that affect implementation) and principals with facilitative leadership styles. Two tables are included. (Contains 22 references.) (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 408 696

Linking School-Based Governance
A Case Study of Two ATLAS S and Instructional Change:
chools

by

David A. Squires, Ph.D.
School Development Program
Yale University
55 College Street
New Haven, CT 06410

dsm35@pantheon.yale.edu

Robert D. Kranyik, Ph.D.
School Development Program
Yale University
55 College Street
New Haven, CT 06410

Presented at:
The American Educational Res
rch Association Convention, 1997

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Squires

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA 026 484

Linking School-Based Governance and Instructional Change:
A Case Study of Two ATLAS Schools

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

The ATLAS Design 1

Design of Study 5

Chronology of ATLAS Implementation 7

Analysis and Findings 14

Discussion 23

Bibliography 28

Linking School-Based Governance and Instructional Change: A Case Study of Two ATLAS Schools

Introduction

What are the linkages between school-based governance and instructional change? Are ideas culled systematically from the best practices of teachers in the school? Is there a search for research proven practices from outside the school? Is the process of adoption of practices left up to individual teachers? Does the adoption of instructional change happen through mandates from the district or school administration? Perhaps some combination?

This paper is a retrospective case study focusing on the linkage between school-based governance and instructional change in two ATLAS schools (ATLAS means communities for **A**uthentic **T**eaching, **L**earning and **A**ssessment for all **S**tudents) where student outcomes have improved over a period of three to four years. ATLAS was funded by NASDC (The New American Schools Development Corporation).

This study informed the work of the ATLAS Seminar, a school improvement consortium funded by the Spencer Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation, consisting of the Comer School Development Program from Yale University, the Coalition of Essential Schools from Brown University, Project Zero from Harvard University , and Educational Development Center, a not-for-profit education research organization in Newton, Massachusetts; all collaborated in developing ATLAS, a "break-the-mold" model for restructuring schools and districts.

The development process for ATLAS design has helped highlight important issues and assumptions about how to conduct school improvement implicit in the approaches of the partners' organizations. To oversimplify, two restructuring assumptions emerged: governance and management play a key role in the process of instructional improvement; instructional improvement begins one classroom at a time and good practices spread. Because the ATLAS design attempts to combine both strategies, we wanted to describe how two schools which successfully adopted the ATLAS strategies worked with these twin issues of school-based governance and instructional change.

The ATLAS Design

The ATLAS design consists of a vision, a goal, five principles reflecting fundamental assumptions about schools and how schools should function, and seven elements describing means by which these principals are achieved (ATLAS design paper, 1995). The ATLAS design is an attempt to specify the most important ideas from the four partners' organizations which will assist schools in "breaking-the-mold." Outlined below are the key elements of the ATLAS vision with important links between instruction and school governance noted.

The ATLAS Vision

"All students can and will achieve high educational standards when they are made to feel important, when they are expected to do well, when they are engaged in challenging and meaningful work, and when they are supported by a unified community of teachers, parents, and other concerned and involved adults." (ATLAS design document)

This vision links instructional change (high expectations, student engagement, and challenging and meaningful work) to community, a part of which consists of school-based management structures. Indeed, the vision posits the most important elements which will unlock improvement.

The ATLAS Goal

The overall ATLAS goal is "To enable every student to be an effective lifelong learner, productive worker, responsible citizen and thoughtful participant in our global community." (ATLAS design document, 1995).

Five ATLAS Principles

The five ATLAS principles reinforce the link between management and governance functions of the school and the teaching and learning process. Each principle is listed and described; then the linkages between governance and learning are explained.

1. Authentic teaching and learning are driven by questions, focus on understanding, and involve challenging, purposeful, and sustained work.

Students acquire essential skills, habits, and understandings when engaged in challenging and meaningful learning activities that are coherent, sustained, and driven by essential questions. ATLAS' goal is to move beyond superficial learning to deep understanding of the most important concepts and principles within and across the disciplines To reach deep understanding, students must actively construct, apply, and demonstrate their knowledge over time. The same is true for the adults in the learning community who must design and implement a system which meets the criteria for authentic teaching and learning.

The first principle focuses on authentic teaching and learning, defining its characteristics, and implying that adults must be involved in a similar community of learners. Such involvement of both adult and student learners in the school may structure the process of learning and teaching in ways that promote ATLAS' goals and vision. Thus, implied in the first principle is a linkage between authentic teaching and learning and the management of the school.

2. Ongoing cycles of planning, action, and reflection characterize effective teaching, learning, and organizational change.

Continuous improvement in education, whether at the individual, classroom, or school-level calls for an ongoing cycle of planning, action, and reflection. It also calls for a creative, problem-solving mind set. Such a process and orientation have a powerful impact on the learning environment, which in turn shapes the people who take part in it.

Again, the link is explicit between organizational change and effective teaching and learning in the second principle. Teachers need the opportunity to plan, act and reflect, singly, in grade level or departmental groups, and as part of the management and governance body of the school. When planning, acting, and reflecting is part of the everyday agenda of the school, there will be a stronger program for students.

3. Relationships matter, because learning is a social activity.

Teaching and learning are most successful when they occur in the context of valued relationships. Teachers must know students well to teach them well. Likewise, the adults in a learning community must know each other well to work in concert to achieve their goals for students. They are models for action as well as thought for their students. This is the context in which valuable habits of mind, heart, and work are formed.

Management and governance are also implied in this description as the adults of the community must work in concert. The social structure the adults model will set the stage for the habits of mind, heart, and work for students. Thus, the third principle explicitly links pedagogy with governance through the social activities of teaching, learning, and governing the school.

4. Shared leadership, commitment, and communication build a collaborative culture for learning.

Building a positive school culture requires shared leadership and a decision-making process that are characterized by collaboration and consensus. It also requires commitment to a collective vision and an understanding of the ongoing nature of change. Effective, ongoing communication and coordination within schools and across the pre-K-12 pathways is essential both to meet the developmental needs of all students and to manage this change process in a no-fault environment.

While the first three principles emphasize teaching and learning, principle four focuses on management and governance issues with secondary links to teaching and learning. Collaboration, consensus and no-fault problem solving provide the keys to managing change linked to meeting students developmental needs.

5. Members of ATLAS schools and pathways see themselves as part of broader, more integrated learning communities.

Educational quality requires partnerships among school personnel, students, parents, policy makers, and other key stakeholders in the community. Only through partnerships can we identify and effectively use the assets that exist inside and outside of schools to support student learning.

The school pathway is a fundamental element of the ATLAS design. The pathway creates a personalized learning environment that spans a student's educational career. The pathway - high school and all of the schools that feed into it, from preschool on - is an academic community that works together to set standards and establish guidelines of coherent teaching, learning, and assessment. Again, the link between organizations is seen as reinforcing and assisting students' learning.

Seven Elements of the ATLAS Design

The seven elements of the ATLAS design provide a framework for achieving the vision, the goal and the principles listed above (ATLAS design document, 1995). They are:

1. Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
2. Personalized Learning Environments
3. Inclusive Organizational and Management Structures
4. Flexible Policy
5. Professional Development
6. Parent and Community Involvement
7. Enabling Media and Technology

When ATLAS began, each of these elements was a structural component of the ATLAS design. In terms of implementation, this means that we would expect to hear reports of these ideas when visiting schools. Further, the elements provide a way to help schools organize their efforts to strengthen their program. Indeed, the power of the ideas could be assessed by the energy released by schools considering the ATLAS design and implementing its components. The effort of school reform is to specify a few ideas that will generate change at a school site which influences student gains. The four partner organizations' contribution was the synthesis of components of reform from all the organizations into a whole, where the sum (ATLAS) would be more powerful than the constituent parts. One of the key ideas was that the work on school governance, pioneered by the School Development Program, could be linked with instructional practices developed by the Coalition of Essential Schools, Project Zero, and Education Development Center.

ATLAS Implementation

The original ATLAS design was implemented in three districts over a period of three years. It was to be implemented along a pathway, that is, a high school and all of the schools feeding into the high school. After the initial commitment by the districts and the ATLAS

organization, the following personnel were assigned; from ATLAS, a site coordinator based at ATLAS but who would visit extensively at the sites; from the district, a support person who would coordinate the school's work with other ATLAS schools in the pathway and the district organization; from the school, a school-based facilitator who would assist in implementation and communication between them. Thus, the ATLAS design calls for simultaneous implementation in a number of different district schools and coordination.

During the first year, school faculties receive an overview of the process and study specific parts of the model. Then, the sites decide on which aspects of the implementation to begin and how they will be adapted to fit the particular needs of the site.

During the second and third years of implementation, schools move through self-designed changes. Outside support is withdrawn after the third year, although local sites are encouraged to carry on implementation. Schools now implementing ATLAS or considering implementation will be following a different design which incorporates the learnings from the first three sites.

Design of Study

The retrospective case study method of inquiry was employed in this study; that is, the researchers visited nominated schools after the ATLAS funding was nearing completion (Spring of 1996), conducted a group interview of the School's Planning and Management Team (SPMT), and follow-up interviews with people who took leadership roles, such as the principal and the head of the School Planning and Management Team. The SPMT is a representative group of teachers, administrators, and parents, including students at the high school level, charged with developing school priorities and plans. Site reports from ATLAS staff were examined and case studies conducted by ATLAS researchers were reviewed.

The schools were selected by asking the ATLAS site facilitators to nominate schools in which they had worked, which were most effectively implementing the ATLAS process, and which had documented improvement in student outcomes as measured by state or national standardized tests, improved attendance, and/or decreased discipline referrals. Three schools were nominated and two decided to participate in the study.

The interview with the SPMT and the individual interviews were open-ended, to allow the story to flow and not influence the responses of the participants (Ely, 1991). However, before the interview, the SPMT was asked to construct a time line of the major events of the ATLAS implementation so that we could be assured that participants had agreed on a consistent story. Thus, the interviewers would not spend valuable time understanding different versions of the same story. During the interviews, the interviewers probed areas described by the literature as important in school change processes (Kranyik & Squires, 1996). The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

The transcribed interviews were analyzed using categories suggested by the literature review (Kranyik & Squires, 1996). Thus, the focus of the analysis was to understand the links between school management and instructional improvement, as revealed through the interview data. Only data which the two schools had in common were used. Specifically, transcribed interviews were divided into "meaning units" and placed in one or more topic areas depending on the categories of the meaning unit. A meaning unit consists of sentences or phrases that are connected since they dealt with the same ideas. Individual meaning units were analyzed and then summarized by topics. Links between topics were then constructed.

Major linkages were used to form themes across topics. These themes were compared to those suggested by the literature. Findings were derived from an understanding of what these themes were saying and from the individual analysis of the topics themselves. (Colaizzi, 1978; Ely, 1991). The data also suggested some themes beyond the researchers' initial interest in the link between instruction and management and these have also been included in this paper.

Once the themes were identified, the educational literature was then employed to develop perspectives from which to view the data. For example, Spillane (1994) suggested districts and states have an impact on the change processes at the school level. Initial drafts of this paper were then shared with the sites to confirm accuracy and validate the appropriateness of content.

In summary, unlike "pure" ethnographic research where only the respondents shape the findings, this study employed categories suggested by previous research to help focus the inquiry while closely examining the interviews for other areas which respondents deemed important.

A descriptive study, such as the one undertaken, is useful when beginning a line of inquiry. Understanding and describing the salient factors which may affect the links between instruction and management is a first step in determining important categories to examine in future work. The open-ended interviews allowed the story to be told as the participants conveyed meaning of their work.

Findings from this descriptive study are limited, since they cannot be reliably used for other ATLAS schools or to inform other change efforts. The findings are suggestive, not prescriptive. Only data from interviews and the data given to us at the sites were used in the study. The design of the study did not allow for direct observation to determine if the incidents reported actually happened in the way they were reported. (However, the study design did rely on a consensus among the School Planning and Management Team of the important incidents found on the time line as one way to help strengthen the link between information reported and actual happenings.) Thus, the study's results are meant only to suggest areas where future research might be fruitfully conducted, or to suggest relevant areas to inform the design of future school improvement efforts.

Chronology of ATLAS Implementation

A chronology of ATLAS implementation is summarized for both schools. This chronology is meant to provide the story from which we derived our analysis and findings.

L.B. Middle School

L.B. Middle School, grades 6-8, is a "multicultural middle school with a variety of programs to meet the needs of its diverse student population. Students represent 50 countries and more than 30 language groups" (1995 Maryland School Performance Program Report). The school is in a suburban area that borders a large city. Total enrollment was 974 in 1995 with 233 new students and 174 transfer-out students. About 15% or 145 students are Limited English Proficient. Seventy three percent of the students are eligible for free/reduced lunches, an index of students whose families are under the federal poverty level.

Some student outcomes have improved during the three years of ATLAS implementation from 1993 - 1996. All students were promoted to the next grade level, unlike in 1990 when only 89% of the students were promoted. Attendance has increased from 1994 to 1995: for sixth graders 1994 attendance was 92.4%, in 1995, 94.2%; seventh and eighth graders increased from 91.1% to 91.7%. Assessed student knowledge on the Maryland School Assessment Program increased in Language Usage, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, although decreased in Reading and Writing when measured by percentage of students exceeding or satisfying state standards. Percentage of students passing the Maryland Functional Tests at grade nine generally increased. Data for 1996 was unavailable at the time of data collection.

Percentage of Ninth Grade Students Passing Maryland School Assessment Program

	1994	1995
Reading	97.6%	97.5%
Math	79.3%	83.5%
Writing	93.0%	96.1%

During the 1990-92 school years, L.B. Middle School was closed and renovated. In 1992-93 the school reopened with a new principal. Many of the former staff members returned from two sites where they had been housed. Much of the year was spent in staff reconnecting and getting equipment like chairs, desks, and tables ordered, delivered and installed. Through the School Planning and Management Team, faculty indicated a need mid-year for students to have more time to interact socially and for more time to be spent on language arts and social studies. A new schedule, developed by the principal and approved by the team, made changes to address those needs.

ATLAS was implemented in 1993-94, and the SPMT became a more representative group after training with ATLAS staff. SPMT members met on a weekly basis, but did not focus on curriculum or instructional issues. The team generally focused more on the school plan and the use of data. During the second semester, the school plan became the focus of the SPMT; and two days were paid for through ATLAS funds to allow staff time to develop a comprehensive plan with staff ownership. The SPMT also focused on scheduling concerns, state test scores, and the ATLAS design of exhibitions and performance assessment, especially in searching for a curriculum package which would incorporate performance and project-based learning. "Buddies Across the Pathway," a mentoring club pairing L.B. students with high school varsity athletes, was also started. Discontent with the revised schedule surfaced.

During the summer, the SPMT wrote a school plan which focused on a manageable number of goals. Representatives from the faculty attended a one week summer institute in another city. The schedule was redesigned by an SPMT subcommittee to reduce the periods from nine to five and included reassignment of certified, non-teaching personnel to classrooms to reduce class size and increase "personalization." EDC presented the "Make It Happen" curriculum at a summer leadership conference. Then, EDC was contracted for an 8 day summer institute for the following summer. The "Make it Happen" curriculum was introduced to the whole staff in the next spring and all staff who wanted to participate, went to the summer institute. Long range plans to implement the program school-wide were made for the Fall.

In the first semester of the 1994-95 school year, schedule changes were implemented as a result of the summer work. The changes included: planning time for the creative arts team; art and music were combined into a humanities class with common teacher planning time; two different school schedules allowed for students to meet two consecutive periods out of five with one set of teachers, thus increasing "personalization"; one teacher was assigned as a writing teacher for the school with duties in staff development; and club activities were rescheduled to be more inclusive and effective and aligned with the social skills and character education program.

Budgeting also became a priority of the SPMT with the SPMT allotting money to groups of teachers, clubs and mentoring activities. With the exception of office supplies, all discretionary school funds were allocated through the SPMT.

Second semester brought discussions of changing the schedule to reduce class size, a concern noted from a staff and parent survey. Survey concerns were: large class sizes didn't allow teachers to do many performance tasks or cooperative learning activities; students needed better study skills; not enough discretionary funds were used to reinforce the academic program; questions arose about crisis intervention work from the guidance staff; the activity period took time away from instruction; and scheduling inconsistencies were noted across the school. Concerns about better study skills resulted in allocation of funds to purchase student agenda books. A Personal Studies course resulted in the next year. Faculty members who felt these new directions were not consistent with their educational ideas were encouraged to transfer to other

schools, an offer accepted by two faculty members.

During the 1995-96 school year, the scheduled changed so that there were three 92 minute scheduling blocks, with a 45 minute personal studies block taught by the two guidance counselors and others, thus giving teams planning time together. Character education was instituted with the homeroom prime time block; health was a separate nine week unit within the PE classes; studio art, music, and chorus were created in place of the humanities class. SPMT meetings focused on performance assessment, classroom instruction, and activities which would reinforce students performance on the state test.

During the spring semester, another scheduling survey was completed with changes being recommended by the SPMT. School plans were made to become a school-wide Title I project. Planning time during the summer was scheduled for an SPMT subcommittee. Another subcommittee was formed to propose schedule changes for the next year.

Over the three years, the school moved from a strong emphasis on the SPMT in a pure management role not associated with instruction, to a group that led instructional practice through configuring budgets, designing schedules, and planning staff and professional development opportunities and roles.

The five ATLAS principles were in evidence. Authentic teaching and learning, focused by the "Make it Happen" curriculum and scheduling changes were part of the school's operation. Ongoing cycles of planning, action, and reflection were evident in the many changes suggested and implemented by the SPMT. Relationships, a concern that initiated the schedule changes, continued as an area of emphasis throughout the three-year period. Shared leadership was evident in the SPMT and the principal's philosophy and beliefs. Inclusion of all faculty in the SPMT, the outreach to parents, and the mentoring program with the high school showed movement toward a more integrated learning community. While the concept of pathway was mentioned by a few interviewees, and there were some program linkages with the high school, this principle had the least amount reported about it.

N.V. High School

N.V. High School, grades 10-12, serves 1700 students from a predominantly poor and minority population. Many students, in this blue collar neighborhood, are the first in their families to graduate from high school and go on to college. The school is part of a mid-size city system. The transient rate is a high 50% as the school serves a nearby military installation.

Some student outcomes have improved. When ATLAS began in the district, only eight students scored above 1000 on the SAT test. During the 1994-95 school year 32 students had scored more than 1000 on the SAT. Scores on the state-mandated test have also improved, as indicated in the table on the next page:

Average Scores on the Maryland State Assessment Battery

	Language Written Expression	Social Studies	Science	Study Skills	Math	Reading
[illegible]	6	3	5	4	[illegible]	[illegible]
'92	49	43	47	44	39	38
'93	51	43	49	48	38	42
'94	51	43	49	48	41	40
'95	55	46	52	48	38	39

There were gains in five of the six subject areas tested in 1996 from the scores in 1992, the year ATLAS began. A new policy was put into place so that students would be excused from final exams based on attendance and academic criteria, an innovation that took place as a result of committees looking at ways to improve school performance and climate.

In the Fall of 1992 the school board appointed a new principal for the high school who had previous experience as an assistant principal at N.V. High School and by central office experience in developing and managing grants. She was familiar with the initial conceptions of ATLAS from grant development work and came to the school with an option to implement the program.

One interviewee commented that the ATLAS story at N.V. is three-fold: an initial focus on instruction provided by exhibitions; a climate improvement effort; and improvement of program coordination as the school culture changed to support the School Planning and Management Team.

During the 1993-94 school year, ATLAS "professional development groups" formed to study several different aspects of the ATLAS design: teaching for understanding, exhibitions, alternative assessment, block scheduling, and management structures. Representatives from the faculty attended a one week summer institute in another city. As the professional development groups met during the year, many faculty members felt stresses because there weren't firm definitions for ATLAS's major topic areas. Faculty found invitations, such as, "Well, tell us how you would like to do it," to be frustrating. However, after the professional development groups completed their work, the faculty found the concept of "teaching for deep understanding" intriguing and wanted to begin the ATLAS implementation there. A staff member from ATLAS worked with the "teaching for deep understanding" group, who would then assist others in

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

implementing this concept during the next school year.

In the Spring of 1994, a new staff position, Student Resource Coordinator, was appointed to work on school climate. Well-liked and respected by staff and students, the Student Resource Coordinator, an ex-football coach, worked with faculty and parents on many different initiatives begun mainly in the 1994-95 school year, i.e. fireside chats, climate pep rallies, and "We Can Make It Happen" activities. A Student Resource Team, (SRT) was formed that Spring along with a Climate Survey to provide data for understanding how to improve school climate. The Student Resource Coordinator who became "Employee of the Year" for 1994-95 was recognized for his contributions by the district administration and fellow faculty members.

The Student Resource Team formed and included building professionals, such as the school nurse, guidance counselor, and teacher representatives. The SRT's charge was to improve unmotivated students' academic performance and address the needs of "kids who fell through the cracks." In addition, students formed a leadership council to promote student involvement in school governance and to involve the community in school activities.

In February 1994, the SPMT formally met, selected members, and clarified roles. Two students were initially included on the SPMT; that number is now expanded to four. During May 1994, an ATLAS staff member provided initial training on the SPMT and the formation of a comprehensive school plan. (The comprehensive school plan had been a district requirement for a number of years, but a representative body from the school was not necessarily involved in putting the plan together.) The study group structure provided the basis for the structure of the SPMT's committees. The previous principal, in place for many years, had an autocratic style; thus, inclusive site-based management was not part of the school culture. This contributed to this ATLAS component getting a slow start.

During the Spring of 1994 faculty were invited to "opt-in" if they were in agreement with ATLAS principles. The opt-in process was designed by the leadership of the curriculum group and the organization and management group. Thirty-two faculty members left over the summer (12 retirements, 2 deaths, and others transferred within the system or left because their military spouses had been reassigned).

Before the start of the 1994-95 school year, a three-week institute was held for teachers and administrators to work on "Exhibitions." The faculty who attended designed the exhibition experience to occur in 11th grade and involve all 11th grade students. The attendees suggested that faculty members mentor students through the process. Students would present a topic on which they had conducted research, to a panel of three teachers and/or community members in March 1995.

After the institutes, an in-service training for all invited staff and a few parents was held during one week at summer's end. The institutes included the 40 new staff who replaced those who had "opted out." Teachers from the school conducted most of the training. At the end of the

institute, there was a decision not to present the "exhibition" work to the SPMT for approval, since the approval process would take too long, and most faculty at the school were involved in the exhibition work anyway. A separate committee with little formal relationship to the SPMT was formed at the high school to handle exhibitions. However, after the first year of the process it was decided that the SPMT would oversee the development of a five-year plan for exhibitions.

Parent activities also increased and included breakfast for scholars, senior parent groups, application for model PTA status, and membership on the SPMT.

During October, follow-up SPMT training by an ATLAS staff member focused on clarifying roles and responsibilities of the SPMT and the principal, and the coordinating efforts of study group committees. The SPMT developed more slowly because the culture of the school had been managed through an autocratic style for many years.

During October, student preparation for the exhibitions started with students choosing a topic. The exhibition process required students to formulate a position paper and prepare for an oral defense. A class meeting introduced the idea to students. Parents and faculty designed the "essential skills and habits" which would be demonstrated in the exhibitions. Faculty prepared by "planning backwards" from the final product to the beginning assignment. Faculty worked to prepare the judges - faculty members, community members and parents for the students' oral defense. Each teacher in the school had to mentor three students, even though they might not have taught eleventh grade courses.

According to a study completed at the school by ethnographers from the ATLAS project, "Exhibitions in N.V. increased external accountability, internal accountability, and moved students toward deep understanding." (White, Fanning and Muncey, 1995) The study found increased external accountability as students demonstrated knowledge in front of teachers, parents and community members, thus engaging the community in the academic work of the school.

Internal accountability also increased. The exhibition process "provided an impetus for teachers to incorporate 'essential skills and habits' into their weekly lesson plans"; "the process yielded products and performances that would help diagnose . . . global needs. Students planning to attend college reacted differently to the exhibitions process than students not planning to attend college." Alternative formats and ways for students to become involved were developed and a need for "remedial" work on the part of some students surfaced.

Progress at this site was also evident on the initial emphasis of ATLAS, increasing teaching and learning for deep understanding. At first there was an emphasis on process, "How do we get this done and organized?" over content and meaning, "What are the exhibitions telling us about students work?" Scoring rubrics helped clarify the idea of deep understanding for students.

As a result of a school c
with 95 minute periods, in an eff mate survey in 1994, block scheduling was instituted in 1995
rt to personalize education.

By year's end, performa
celebration. Thirty-two students e improved. Faculty, students, and parents had a school-wide
previous year. cored more than 1000 on the SAT compared with just eight the

As the SPMT clarified it
take on the central role of provi organization and responsibilities, other forces helped the SPMT
exhibition process with its nee ng organization around the school's instructional program. The
faculty and community create for extensive coordination within the faculty and between the
necessary to achieve a consens recognition that a representative body like the SPMT was
exhibitions were only one emp about how the exhibition process would be organized. Yet,
involvement also had to be co asis of many; other efforts around school climate and student
different school and commun dinated. Thus, the SPMT became the driving force for many
mechanism to lend coherency initiatives. The SPMT gained increasing influence as a
instructional efforts drove the s and collaboration across school initiatives. In this case,
ool to organize better through the SPMT.

During the Summer of
plan under the authority of the 995, the SPMT had a retreat to develop a comprehensive school
academic achievement for all PMT for the first time. The plan included two goals: to improve
staff. The latter goal resulted udents; and to improve respect among teachers, students, and
respect difficulties among stu rom a school climate survey, which indicated relationship and
expanded use of professional d ents and between students and staff. The plan included an
A coherent and comprehensiv elopment time to work on organizational and curriculum issues.
1995-96 school year. plan emerged from the effort and structured the work during the

The 1995-96 school ye , the third year of ATLAS implementation, began with training
new staff members. Indeed, th se staff members were now recruited because they supported the
ATLAS goals and principles. ome of the training sessions focused on how teaching students
reading strategies would be in rporated into all courses and monitored by department chairs.
The emphasis on reading cam directly from staff recommendations based on experiences with
students in the exhibition pro ss. This effort was also included as part of the comprehensive
school plan proposed by the SI MT.

The summer work of
school plan for the year and p e SPMT was shared. In October, staff received a copy of the
SPMT was expanded from tw vided input for the revision process. Student membership on the
and review the SPMT role. to four. A spring retreat was scheduled to review the school plan

The SPMT was also g
Understanding" initiatives br hering recommendations for curriculum changes. "Teaching for
scheduled on a back-to-back adened as courses in science, social studies, and English were
asis, allowing students and teachers more time together. There

were, however, some initial problems as faculty tried to figure out the scope of particular instructional units and what it meant to teach for deep understanding within a specific unit's context. Additionally, science didn't always fit into the interdisciplinary units in a satisfactory way. To solve these problems with multidisciplinary units the department chairs got together to work out a sample unit for the 1996-97 school year. (This was reported to be a good staff development activity benefiting not only the teachers but also the department chairs as well.) Co-teaching with the special education program was also tried. For next year, the faculty and SPMT will be looking at a trimester program rather than semesters through an SPMT scheduling committee. A technology plan was developed for the elementary, middle, and high schools in the ATLAS pathway.

Changes were also made to the exhibition process by the exhibition sub-committee of the SPMT. Mentors, who helped students through the program in previous years through random assignment were replaced with mentors who taught the 11th grade writing program.

Over the three years, the school progressed from an initial emphasis on exhibitions, through concern for school climate and making relationships more personal, to building a School Planning and Management Team that coordinated and led efforts in improving instruction.

ATLAS's five principles were in evidence. Authentic teaching and learning, focused by the exhibition process and scheduling changes had developed. Ongoing cycles of planning, action, and reflection were evidenced by in the growing significance of the Comprehensive School Plan and the SPMT, and by the growing use of data driven decision-making. Improving relationships were linked to climate improvement, the new position of Student Resource Coordinator, and the many activities generated through that position. Shared leadership was evident as the culture changed from autocratic to one which included students and parents in important ways on the SPMT and in other school activities. The pathway concept, involving all in the high school feeder pattern, was not as central, although efforts in developing a technology plan indicated some effort in that direction.

Analysis and Findings

Analysis of the data derived from the interviews and the examination of related materials resulted in the formulation of several findings, each of which is based on a preponderance of evidence gathered from the two cases which enabled the researchers to draw tentative and limited conclusions about: links between SPMT and instruction; ATLAS as a catalyst for school improvement; school leadership; the importance of context and roles of supporting players; and findings more generally related to the process of educational change and to selected constructs and findings found in the literature.

Findings Related to School Management Teams and Instruction

Specific planning and instructional methodologies inherent in the ATLAS model helped

both faculties to initiate appropriate diagnostic efforts and planning activities early in the change effort. Elements of the School Development Program (SDP), an integral part of the ATLAS model, served to help structure and facilitate the work of the SPMT, and in turn, the work of the entire school. One participant said, "As the SDP piece became clear and as the ATLAS piece on instruction became clear, the confusion was relieved." There were still some concerns as evidenced by one teacher who said, "Okay, now I know what it is we're supposed to be doing, but I'm concerned about how its going to affect me and what I do every day. And, those things then started to be addressed."

Ways in which issues surfaced. Teams reported four major ways in which issues related to the school improvement effort surfaced. These included: (a) participation in the ATLAS program; (b) participation in a collaborative problem solving and decision making process, (people could bring problems to SPMT); (c) the provision and analysis of data concerning student performance; and (d) certain leadership behaviors exhibited by the school principals.

A major focus of ATLAS is its emphasis on a collaborative process for looking at student learning, encouraging teachers and others to analyze student needs, and then developing appropriate plans. ATLAS provides a model for focusing on what teachers viewed to be the central element in their daily effort -- planning for enhanced student achievement with flexibility to use resources in more appropriate ways to facilitate such achievement. ATLAS drew the management teams into an inquiry and planning process by providing structures, training, and opportunities to begin looking at student needs. The fact that these ATLAS related activities were undertaken early in the improvement effort was critical, since it helped to set a firm and productive direction for the improvement effort. As one teacher stated, "There is something exciting for me and I think for a lot of people, to be in the reform movement [ATLAS]. And, you come in with new ideas and they are heard. Then, they are acted upon and they are experimented with."

The SPMT gradually clarified its role of addressing problems focused on students and their learning. This focus unfolded over the first and second years as team members considered other problems of individual faculty; such as the responsibility of the SPMT in ordering office supplies, and the role of parents (advisory or participative) on the SPMT.

The development of a high level of collaboration on the part of the SPMT, due in great measure to ATLAS training, also aided in the development of a process and a positive climate which encouraged team members to surface issues, and to take a hard look at students' needs and options. Collaboration appeared to develop trust, a sense of interdependency, and a willingness to take risks for the benefit of students. As one team member said, "As we identified problems and made decisions, it was important that team members both listened and talked." Another reflected that, "Nobody wanted to touch the concept that we might actually influence a fellow staff member's position, as to whether they would be here or not. But we've reached a comfort level which enables us to discuss things like this."

Another major factor in surfacing issues was the use of data - again, encouraged by ATLAS concepts and training to identify needs, raise issues, and stimulate change. In discussing a problem related to a group of students being turned off in a certain class, one teacher remarked, "Well, that's six or seven kids. That's a big piece of data you know. So we had to talk with the teacher and the team. Our approach was that here is some more information that we need to think about. So the team really began to look at that stuff."

Finally, there was an important leadership role played by the principal in surfacing issues. Principals provided data. They facilitated collaboration. They encouraged team members to look at aspects of the teaching and learning process which went beyond the individual classroom.

How School Planning and Management Team organized resources. The ways in which the SPMT organized material and human resources to address educational needs is a critical factor in the school improvement effort. This study identified several ways in which effective teams worked with resources to enhance effectiveness of the school change effort.

It was evident that a strong underlying principle for resource allocation was that the highest priority was given to student needs. Student problems were a major focal point of discussions and action decisions. Priority was afforded to not only the students specifically, but also to the overall best interests of the school as opposed to convenience or convention. Further, each SPMT set priorities within the context of assumptions about children, learning, and school needs. This perspective facilitated collaboration since it enabled team members to rally around the central purposes of their existence -- the needs of the students. It also helped to channel significant problems and issues to the teams, since it became clear that the team would not use valuable time to deal with either trivial or peripheral issues. As one team member viewed the process, "Because while we can improve the number of A's, B's, and C's, we are talking about rigor; we're talking about a school focused on the academic development of students; and we're talking about standards. And, that's the important work, standards." Another pointed to how the SPMT limited discussion to substantive issues by saying, "So there was this general decision that we wouldn't have more than, say, five issues on the agenda at most. And, we address at least one major issue that pertained to data and the school improvement plan. We say that the school improvement plan is driving the school, and agenda items related to the plan should be given priority."

Comer (1980, 1989) has formulated several structures of the School Development Program model as bases for analysis of team activities. These included: (a) development of a comprehensive educational improvement plan; (b) the implementation of staff development activities related to intended changes as a result of the plan, discussed above; and, (c) the use of data to modify and assess progress of the plan and staff development activities led and coordinated by the SPMT. As this was part of the ATLAS model, we will discuss these issues next.

How School Planning and Management Team used data. SPMTs were further examined

from the perspective of how they used data. A preponderance of evidence suggested that solutions were developed based on data analysis, that such decisions were the result of genuine collaboration, and that there were regular reviews of progress made to test the effectiveness of implementation. As one team member observed, "We always review the data. Our belief is that you build the instructional program and everything else has to revolve around it." It appears that key factors in strategy and solution generation included relevance to the data base, the harnessing of team members' talents in a collaborative way to make decisions, and the willingness to regularly review progress and make changes along the way.

School Planning and Management Team organized staff development. Team activities were examined regarding ways in which teams rendered assistance to the school as a whole in the improvement effort. Both teams played strong roles in the design, funding, and implementation of appropriate staff development programs. The teams also communicated strongly to other faculty that instructional effectiveness was a key goal so that all would be encouraged to use their time and resources toward this end. Another significant type of assistance was that provided to parents, including special efforts to involve parents in the improvement process, and to build communication links with parents in a variety of ways.

Staff development was a high priority within the context of comprehensive school plans - to insure that the knowledge and skills required for both the planning process and the implementation process were developed across the school community. As one teacher said, "I think that we put together a lot of staff development through the effort of the SPMT because, whenever there was a need, the SPMT would have somebody come in and "in-service" us on whatever it was that people were training in. And, that was a very important part of it."

School Planning and Management Team built the comprehensive school plan. Each of the two schools developed a comprehensive educational improvement plan which served to drive the educational improvement effort. Critical to effective plan development was the early provision of staff development activities around the planning process which had the effect of providing the knowledge needed for assessing educational needs, setting priorities, and engaging the overall school community in the planning. As one teacher said, "As a School Planning and Management Team, and as a community, we've been talking about focusing on improvement - the improvement of teaching and learning. And we've been talking for the last three years about, well, when we engage kids in active learning, does that mean they're learning? And so we've done it, we've had conversations, we've planted the seed and then talked about it."

Both SPMTs were characterized by high levels of collaboration, which resulted in perceptions that better quality solutions had been generated. In addition, the levels of collaboration enabled teams to conduct business more effectively, and contributed to the building of a more positive climate within which the school improvement effort could take place.

ATLAS as a Driving Force for Instructional Change

It was evident that both school teams regarded participation in ATLAS as a genuine, positive driving force for instructional change. ATLAS provided a philosophical perspective on instructional improvement and a methodology for initiating dialogue regarding the improvement process. Such key concepts as exhibitions, personalization, and teaching for understanding, all elements of the Coalition of Essential Schools model, provided a practical and effective methodology for undertaking the improvement effort. Additionally, the School Development Program's model for team management, the attendant processes of inclusion, consensus, collaboration, and "no fault" provided a methodology which enabled the group to work as a team. Thus, elements of the ATLAS model provided a basis for helping the school team to plan and carry out efforts to improve both the conditions for learning, and the school's organization of the learning effort itself.

A significant factor in engendering confidence, commitment, and support for the change process among team members and the staff as a whole, was the nature of ATLAS as a national school restructuring effort. People were motivated by recognition of the fact that they were part of a national effort supported by major institutions such as Harvard, Yale, and Brown universities, and the Educational Development Center. As one person stated, "We were told that we could break the mold. That led people to be more accepting of change. I think that it led this group to be more willing to try." Another said it this way, "I think that what kicked us over into being more confident and willing to take the risks required was ATLAS. Because of ATLAS we were kind of given this concept that you can break the mold and do whatever it takes to achieve what you are trying to do."

In conclusion, it appears that affiliation with a national restructuring model can facilitate an instructional improvement effort led by a SPMT, and can serve to engender institutional pride, enthusiasm, and the sense that the team, as well as the entire group of stakeholders, are not out there alone in implementing change.

Leadership - The Role of the Principal

A critical factor in the ability of both SPMT's to function effectively in the change effort was the ability of the each principal to play a variety of roles which supported the change effort. Both principals were proactive in desiring to change their schools, but were committed to affect change by empowering the SPMT or the study groups to plan and implement the change process. Also, both were able to come to grips with the need to step out of traditional leadership roles and become contributing members of the SPMT when appropriate, yet to continue to play more unilateral leadership roles when needed to move the change effort forward. The ability to play a participant role or a leadership role, as appropriate, was described by one teacher in this way, "And sometimes, it's funny, at meetings, when [the principal] was not the facilitator, we take turns and we raise our hands and sometimes he sits there and goes, 'Whoops!' because I guess it's hard. You know, you are stepping out of the role of being a real leader in the building, the

one who has final accountability, but then sitting in a meeting when you are just another person in the meeting and assuming a different kind of role. I have a lot of respect for a principal being able to do that and do it well. And, I think that our SPMT runs very smoothly."

One principal described the role change in this way, "You have to give up power to gain power. And, the power is in that you'll let them make their own decisions and you'll hang with them. You don't go back then and undo, you know, because you don't like it. You have to be willing to do that." A teacher added that "I think that the leadership style of the principal allows this fluidity to occur and to be part of the consensus."

Finally, the principals' commitment to provide staff members opportunities for staff development was regarded by both principals as an essential part of the collaborative change process. The commitment of the principals to professional development of staff was summed up by one principal who said simply, "I work hard at developing people." That principal took great pride in the number of faculty members who were making presentations at state and national meetings, and those who were participating in dialogues with other professionals on projects of various types. The principal reasoned that the provision of such growth opportunities was a critical element in the change effort.

Context of the ATLAS Schools and the Change Process

This section examines how the context affected the schools implementing ATLAS by examining how different roles were played, specifically, the role of the on-site coordinator, the superintendent, the state department of education and other district administration. Finally, the schools' previous experience with other reform efforts will be considered.

The role of the on-site coordinator. Each school team, and the faculty as a whole, was served by an on-site ATLAS coordinator who was able to effectively build a bridge between the concepts and processes of the ATLAS model, the needs of the school team, and the school as a whole. Mentioned as particular contributions made by the on-site coordinators were sensitivity to the readiness of each individual to begin thinking about change, and the further ability to help build a consensus among team members in support of such ATLAS concepts as "child-centeredness" and collaborative decision - making. The ability of ATLAS coordinators to sense the training needs of the staff members was illustrated by the comments of one management team member who said, "We knew what we were doing because we were trained. And ATLAS took the time to give us training. I mean that I, for one, had the opportunity to participate in an ATLAS Training Institute for a week. It was an incredible experience."

ATLAS site coordinators' backgrounds were also important. Both schools began their change effort in areas of the site coordinator's expertise and familiarity. N.V. began with exhibitions and followed later with school planning and management teams while L.B. began with the organizational issues and later folded in instructional concerns.

Site coordinators also provi
implementation issues and concern
presented as a "whole," the site co
"what" to implement first. In som
include a recipe on how the implem
the leadership at the sites had to fi
the site level, often in anxiety prod

ided a bridge between the abstract idea of ATLAS and the s at the district/school sites. When the ATLAS design was ordinators had to help guide sites in deciding a sequence of e cases, the support from the ATLAS organizations did not entation should take place. Thus, the site coordinators with ure out how to make the general ATLAS principles work at ucing circumstances.

The role of the superintende
important to the change process.

ent. In both schools, the SPMT viewed the superintendents as
the N.V. superintendent didn't ar
meetings and in some training ses
school system policies and regulati

Both superintendents supported the ATLAS model, although ive until half way through the project. They participated in sions. In addition, each permitted flexibility in working with
member of the SPMT described t
neatest things was that when Mr.
week "I Search" training. And, h
had worked on them for two week
I ever had was when he gave us su
Just by saying 'Go for it! Try the
that was -- wow!" As another tea
significant factor in the change pro

ons which might have hindered ATLAS implementation. One he role played by the superintendent in this way, "One of the _____ was still our superintendent, he came to our two e listened to all of our presentations made by the groups who s, and he sat through it all. One of the most touching moments ich accolades and pledged his support of what we were doing. 'I Search" and don't worry about the CRT's this year.' I mean, m member said, when asked whether the superintendent was a cess, "It had to come from him!"

State education departmen
observed that state departments
curriculum and instruction. He
districts can play an important
classroom level. Roles of both ag

t and school district administration roles. Spillane (1994) has of education are playing a growing role in the realm of further observed that central office personnel in local school role in successfully introducing change at the school and encies were examined in the present study.

The State Department of E
the change effort. A well-conceiv
encourage the SPMT, and the fa
example, one team member obse
instruction, because it tested such
judgments rather than knowled
seriously on the teaching and
implementation."

ducation in each case, played an identifiable role in facilitating ed state testing program, in one instance, served as a catalyst to culty as a whole to examine curriculum and instruction. For rved that, "The (state) test forced us to look at curriculum and elements as summarizing, comparing, contrasting, and making ge alone. This resulted in the school teams focusing more learning processes as base for educational planning and

In addition, staff develop
opportunities for team members
curricular and instructional issue

ment activities offered by state education departments provided to gain new knowledge and sharpen skills, particularly regarding s which were major team focal points.

In one perspective, stat
statewide teaching and learning

te education department initiatives on testing programs and priorities served as catalysts for change. These catalysts were

viewed by SPMT members as strong mandates which called for concerted efforts at the school level. Local school districts and district leadership could have called for specific and singular approaches to meeting these mandates across the district. Yet, in these two instances, local districts permitted, and even encouraged the development of change initiatives at the school level, permitting flexibility in program, materials, and resources. Thus, it appears that while state mandates, especially those directly related to the assessment of curriculum and instruction, can move SPMTs to action, it is also important to note that local school district responses to such mandates seem to be most effective, in these two cases, as they permitted flexibility, and were supportive of school level efforts.

The work of the SPMTs was supported by district policies which provided flexibility in addressing the change effort. As one team member said, "I started to believe that change was possible when the school district was really committed to letting us make the changes we wanted to make." Another said, "We were permitted the freedom by the school district to reassign a teaching position. We did not have to replace a specific subject matter teacher with a similar teacher, but could use the teaching position in a more flexible way."

This flexibility, together with well-articulated district commitment to school level change in the interest of students, supported by the efforts of superintendents and other administrative personnel, encouraged the SPMT to take risks necessary to make change.

Previous history and other initiatives. In both schools, it was evident that there had been experiences with collaborative change making in the past. Those experiences, some of which were state department initiatives, served to facilitate the move to ATLAS, since there had been some positive previous involvement with such programs as Effective Schools, and similar initiatives. Such involvement facilitated receptivity to many of the ATLAS ideas. In addition, ongoing initiatives in the district also continue to support the team's effort to facilitate change. As one person observed, "Another piece is that a lot of staff here is involved in county initiatives. As a result, they take it upon themselves to go out and experience new ideas and initiatives and bring back ideas that support what we are trying to do."

The Relationship of the Study's Findings to the Literature on School Change

Wohlstetter (1994) had confirmed the previous conclusions of Lawler (1986) that "schools that were introducing significant change in the teaching and learning process had invested more heavily in the development of both team process skills and instructional staff development. Finally, they had more mechanisms for participation in the governance of the school, and a greater percentage of the faculty involved." The present study tended to support the findings regarding both the development of team process skills and instructional staff development initiatives. It was evident that the heavy investment in the development of process skills for the management teams on the part of ATLAS played a significant role in enhancing team effectiveness, and that the provision of substantial staff development focusing on curricular and instructional improvement strongly supported the change effort, especially at the

management team level.

Equally important is the observation that the focus on curricular and instructional improvement, energized in part by state and district testing program demands, provided to the team members a challenge that was central to their day-to-day work. This observation tended to confirm the powerful and effective role which can be played by a management team which, in addition to developing its process skills, uses these skills to address substantial curricular and instructional issues (Wohlstetter, 1994).

The overall change effort was examined within the perspective of several constructs posited by Lippet (1967) regarding forces affecting organizational change. These included: (a) forces having a positive effect on the development of change ideas, and roles played by the management team in utilizing these positive forces to affect change; (b) forces which hindered change idea development, and the roles played by the SPMT in minimizing or altering hindering forces; (c) forces having positive effects on the diffusion of change ideas, and roles played by the school management team in utilizing these ideas to facilitate diffusion; and (d) forces in the change setting which hindered the diffusion of change ideas, and the roles played by the management team in minimizing or altering theses forces.

Several factors were identified as positive forces influencing the development of change, or school improvement ideas. The role of ATLAS as an external force was considered to be a very strong factor, since it provided not only timely information, but, more importantly, a process where change ideas could be developed. One teacher, in referring to the development of new ideas, remarked, "The ATLAS process makes you do that. It was the most powerful thing that could have happened to us." Other factors identified included the need to be accountable for school improvement, especially within the context of budgetary restrictions, and the availability of professional growth opportunities offered by state education agencies and nearby institutions of higher education.

It was interesting to note that the limited resources available in both schools were not identified as significant hindrances to idea development. Rather, human factors were, such as the unwillingness of some teachers to change, teacher attitudes toward involvement in the change process, and the unwillingness of some team members to approach idea generation with a "we" rather than an "I" perspective. A final factor identified which could hinder the process was the use of educational jargon, especially when communicating with parents and community members. One frustrated teacher put it this way, "We were trying to explain to parents. We had a twenty-eight page explanation. And, you know, parents were tearing us apart saying, 'You are talking jargon.'"

Several factors were identified as contributing to the delusion and spread of school improvement ideas. The development of team member ownership was a critical factor, since ideas appeared to be more quickly accepted as a result of ownership. This also appeared true among team members when they felt that they could provide input for team meetings, either

directly or through team members, and that such input would be considered. Early training in change strategies, communication and group process were also identified as important factors, as were efforts to build the school culture and climate so that higher levels of trust could be achieved. Another important factor identified was parent cooperation, since parents proved to be important communication links to other parents regarding change ideas generated for school improvement.

Fullan (1993) has posited that benefits of an effective school change effort include school climate improvement, the ability to manage conflict positively, and the development of the perception that everyone is working together to affect changes. The present study was able to determine that the climate of each of the two schools was viewed to have improved due to the school improvement effort. One teacher observed, "We've grown to build a trust that this group has the common agenda of what is best for the kids" Another added, "The biggest commitment is, I think, is of the community and the people who work in the system. And looking at doing things better by allowing everyone to play a part in making sure that our kids are successful."

Both schools suggested that over time, teams grew in their ability to manage conflict positively. The perception that everyone is working together to affect change was demonstrated by one teacher who said, "We didn't jump into heavy issues right away. I mean, we did have it evolve from some basic things to get to the point where we are today, and feeling comfortable making those kinds of decisions, and also feeling comfortable saying what we really feel.

Finally, Fullan has suggested that educational change must begin with a moral commitment to change schools for the benefit of the students. In the two cases discussed here, it was strongly evident that the SPMT's, and in turn, many others working in the school setting were very committed to the central value that schools are for children. As this value became stronger in the daily activities of the management teams and the schools, themselves, enthusiasm for collaborative change seemed to grow, as did the willingness of participants to take risks to try new approaches to teaching and learning, change resource allocations and adopt new forms of scheduling. As one teacher indicated, "We've grown to build a trust that this group has a common agenda of what's best for kids. And, I think that we've found that we are all on the same page, and so we're not at opposite ends of the continuum, where it's them versus us."

Discussion

What has been learned about the link between shared management, decision making and the instructional program? And what else has been learned along the way?

Linkages Between Instruction and School Management

The study began by asking about the linkages between instructional change and school-based management. This question was emphasized as school reform efforts appear to highlight either school management or instructional issues. Indeed, this tension was manifest in ATLAS

between representatives of the Comer School Development Program -- management -- and the Coalition of Essential Schools, Project Zero, and curriculum packages from EDC -- instruction. ATLAS called the question, in a way, by asking the schools to organize around both management and instruction.

Did schools organize around both management and instructional issues? Yes, eventually, although they approached it based on the local context and the "home" organizations of the facilitator from ATLAS. For example, at N.V. High School, the facilitator from ATLAS had been with the Coalition and so was most familiar with working with exhibitions. At L.B. Middle School, the district had had a strong push for a number of years toward site-based management; consequently, the SPMT was implemented first. By contrast, at N.V. High School, the previous principal had a "top-down" management style; consequently, a site-based management philosophy was not part of the culture of the school. Thus, the SPMT was implemented later than the instructional changes.

But both schools ended with stronger instructional programs and stronger SPMT's, despite very different starting points. Indeed, at N.V. High School, the number and complexity of the changes along with a growing familiarity with site-based management processes helped to strengthen the initial push for exhibitions and improvements in school climate. At L.B. Middle School, an initially organized School Planning and Management Team, through a succession of redefinition's of their role and purpose, became a strong structure which concentrated almost exclusively on instructional issues and planning for program improvement.

These linkages between instruction and management provided for more coherence in the school program, both from a planning and an instructional point of view. School plans and goals became more centered on issues affecting students, and less around the needs and interests of faculty. But that coherence at both schools took time to develop as participants sorted out appropriate roles for the team and its participants and became more familiar with the mechanics of making collaborative decisions through consensus.

As instruction became the center of the School Planning and Management Team's functions, the instructional emphasis in the school broadened and deepened. While test scores were of initial concern, participants, through examining student work and sharing that work through exhibitions, became much more focused on instructional processes, and scope and sequence within the curriculum. Additionally, both SPMTs examined and changed how school schedules and financial decisions supported student learning.

While the data gathered in this study is limited to two sites, the strong links which developed between instruction and school management may need to be examined in more detail. Perhaps restructuring programs which do not include aspects of both instruction and management may provide only a portion of what is needed to assist the catalytic effect that restructuring theoretically provides.

Other interesting aspects of the stories from the two schools were noted. While outside the original scope of our inquiry, our data were strong enough to make the following comments.

ATLAS as Catalyst for Change

Agencies, foundations, universities, state departments of education, and districts, can't "buy" school improvement. Only school communities can "buy into" restructuring ideas. Thus, the restructuring ideas serve as a catalyst - a small amount of energy which releases a large amount of energy at the site.

ATLAS acted as a catalyst to release a great deal of energy in both these sites, although the initial support to the sites was more than what most school districts could afford. However, the amount and direction of change was heartening. The ideas for restructuring in ATLAS did "break the mold" in these two schools, although both saw the continuing effort to involve more years of work.

Two successful implementations of the ATLAS design suggest that, at least in these two sites, ATLAS provided a catalyst for significant school change. What might be some reasons for its success at these two sites?

1. While the ATLAS design is complicated, it does combine ideas about both instruction and school management, as discussed in the previous section. Instruction and management issues were becoming synonymous at the two sites.

2. Association with ATLAS and the partner organizations -- the Education Development Center, Brown, Harvard, and Yale -- increased participants' confidence that change could be accomplished.

3. The use of study groups and the time to think about a wide range school change ideas encompassed in ATLAS allowed participants to understand the effort's scope and reflect on potential implications for the school. The fact that more than a few faculty decided to leave both schools at the end of that period showed that the study group provided some of the necessary information on which those decisions about leaving could be made. This signaled a change in both school cultures.

4. The ATLAS implementation encouraged sites to develop their own ways of using the principles and elements of the ATLAS design. There appeared to be the appropriate level of specificity in the principles and elements, although many told us that not being more specific was frustrating for some faculty. In these two sites, the strategy of putting forth the principles and elements of change design, then allowing time for study and reflection, ended with positive results and significant changes at both schools.

Context Counts

Schools change within a context; that context may support or hinder change. Here were some factors at both sites which appeared to the participants to be important.

- state mandated assessments reinforcing a drive for school improvement
- district support from the superintendent level
- district respect for decisions made at school level
- principals with experience at the district office
- opt-in time period - those who did not want to continue could leave easily and without a penalty
- previous history with Effective Schools programs
- data-driven decision making
- previous experience with school plans.

Owens (1981) proposed three types of change strategies: power-coercive, rational-empirical, and normative-educative. Within the change context of these two schools we found all three. The first year of studying the ATLAS components represented the normative-educative as the schools attempted to change norms through providing information and time to digest that information. The dedication to data-driven decision making, the school, student, and parent surveys employed the rationale-empirical strategy. The opt-in time period in both schools, while well handled and effective, was a power-coercive strategy to further the change process by letting everyone know what was going to be expected and then giving everyone the chance to opt-in. State mandates also imply a power-coercive strategy. The combination of strategies toward the clear goal of serving students better strengthened the implementation of the ATLAS program at the two sites. No one strategy predominated. As both had similar change trajectories, examining whether this pattern exists in other successful implementation may yield firmer conclusions.

Leadership

Both principals were new to the principalship. Yet the values they brought to the process supported the ATLAS goals. Specifically, they valued collaboration and group decision-making processes, and defined their role as facilitator rather than leader. Indeed, they could function both as a leader and as "one among equals" as the situation demanded. Both gradually reduced their authority to make decisions, as the School Planning and Management Teams grew into and further refined their roles and defined their decision-making processes. Thus, the SPMT took on many of the decisions, particularly about instruction and student welfare, which had, at first, been the principal's purview. Both principals had the ability to be both "inside" the process, a full participant, while, paradoxically, also maintaining an "outside" reflective stance to their role and its impact. We are reminded of Maxine Greene's ideas (1973, p.6) about teaching from her book *Teacher as Stranger*, where the goal "is nothing more than to think what we are doing." Both principals could think within and outside of their leadership and could be a stranger in the

familiar place called school.
expanding the staff's professio Both principals believed in "growing" their staff, thereby
the professional community be al opportunities, particularly for leadership in the school and in
of students better; decision-ma nd. Most important, both were committed to making the lives
concerns. ing and priority-seeking was consistently made around student

Certainly the ATLAS fl
schools need such "break-the- urished because of their leadership. Perhaps, "break-the-mold"
congruent with the adopted ch old" leaders, or leaders whose values and people skills are
growth appears to be a major ch nge processes. Identifying such people and encouraging their
llenge in school restructuring.

Moral Dimensions

Concern for students in
instructional focus, the center both schools moved gradually to the center: the center of the
Management Team deliberatio of climate improvement, the center of School Planning and
thing to do; it needed to be don s. This movement had a moral dimension; it was the "right"
convinced that tapping into "do Talking with the many leaders in both schools, we came away
stories told to us in both schoo ng right" was a powerful motivator for many. There were many
need and many stories about h s about how the school community rallied to help individuals in
The emphasis on "personalizati w decisions made through ATLAS made students lives better.
teachers come together to know n" of the schools has a moral component of helping students and
and respect each other.

We would suggest expl
We believe such a link allow ring the link between school restructuring and the moral domain.
provided for start-up have drie the program to continue long past the time additional funds
rooted in our morals and value up. The power to "break-the-mold" and change school culture is
process. Unearthing that root may be most important in the restructuring

Bibliography

1995 Maryland School Performance Program Report, (1995). Baltimore, MD: Maryland State Department of Education.

Atlas design document. (1994). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Becker, B. J. & Hedges, L. V. (1992). A review of the literature on the effectiveness of Comer's School Development Program. A report prepared for the Rockefeller Foundation. New Haven, CT: The School Development Program, 55 College Street.

Colaizzi, P. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. Valle & M. King (Eds.), Existential-phenomenological Psychology as an Alternative Approach. Baltimore, MD: William & Wilkins.

Comer, J. P. (1980). School Power. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Comer, J. P. (1988). Educating poor and minority children. Scientific American, 259, 42-48.

Comer, J. P. (1989). "The School Development Program: a psycho-social model of school intervention." In G.L. Berry & J.K. Aseman (Eds.), Black students: psycho-social issues and academic achievement. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Ely, M.(1991). Doing qualitative research: circles within circles. New York, NY: The Falmer Press.

Fullan, M. (1993). Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform. New York, NY: The Falmer Press.

Green, M. (1973). Teacher as stranger. Bellmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.

Kranyik, R. D. & Squires, D. A. (1995). Implementing site-based management through the Comer model. New Haven, CT: Yale Child Study Center, Comer Project for Change in Education. School Development Program.

Kranyik, R. D. & Squires, D. A. (1996). Review of the literature on school-based governance and instructional change. New Haven, CT: Yale Child Study Center, Comer Project for Change in Education. School Development Program.

Lippet, R. et.al. (1967). The teacher as innovator, seeker and sharer of new practices. In R.I. Miller, (Ed.), Perspectives on Educational Change. New York, NY: Meridith Publishing Company.

Malen, B., Ogawa, R. T. and Kranz, J. (1989). An analysis of site-based management as an educational reform strategy: an occasional policy paper. Provo, UT: Department of Educational Administration, The University of Utah.

Odden, E. R. & Wohlstetter, P. (1995). Making school-based management work. Educational Leadership, 52-5, 32-36.

Ogawa, R. T. & White, P. A. (1994). School-based management: an overview. In S. A. Morhman & P. Wohlstetter (Eds.), School-based management: organizing for high performance. San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass Publishers.

Owens, R. G. (1981). Organizational behavior in education, 2nd edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Spillane, J. P. (1994). How districts mediated between state departments and teachers' practice. In R. F. Elmore & S. H. Fuhrman, (Eds.) The governance of curriculum, 1994 yearbook of the Asociation for Supervisions and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Squires, D. A. & Kranyik, R. D. (1996). The Comer program: changing school culture. Educational Leadership, 53, 4.

White, N., Fanning, K. & Muncey, D. (1995). ATLAS seminar ethnography project third report: exhibition in the Gorham and Norfolk ATLAS pathways: 1994-95. ATLAS Seminar Paper. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Wholstetter, P., Smyer, R. & Mohrman, S. (1994). New boundaries for school-based management: the higher involvement model. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 16 (3), 268-286.

Wholstetter, P. & Odden, A. (1992). Rethinking school-based management policy and research. Educational Administration Quarterly, 28, 529-549.